

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An expression system for simultaneously expressing nucleic acid sequences encoding  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  subunits of a nitrile hydratase, comprising a first plasmid containing at least one nucleic acid sequence encoding the  $\alpha$  subunit of a nitrile hydratase, and a second plasmid containing at least one nucleic acid sequence encoding the  $\beta$  subunit of a nitrile hydratase, wherein the nucleic acid sequences encoding the  $\alpha$  subunit of the nitrile hydratase and the  $\beta$  subunit of the nitrile hydratase are each present separately on the first and second plasmids, respectively, and not on the same plasmid.
2. (Original) The expression system as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that it is present in *E. coli* as host.
3. (Previously Presented) The expression system of claim 1, characterized in that expression of the nucleic acid sequences encoding the  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  subunits is under the control of what is in each case the same promoter.
4. (Original) The expression system as claimed in claim 3, characterized in that the promoter is a T7 promoter.
5. (Previously Presented) The expression system of claim 1, characterized in that at least one nucleic acid sequence encoding the p47K protein or the p12K protein is present per plasmid set employed.
6. (Previously Presented) The expression system of claim 1, characterized in that the nucleic acid sequences encoding the  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  nitrile hydratase subunits are derived from rhodococcus strains.

7. (Previously Presented) The expression system of claim 1, characterized in that the nucleic acid sequences encoding the  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  nitrile hydratase subunits are used in a form in which they are modified in accordance with the *E. coli* codon usage.
8. (Currently Amended) The expression system as claimed in ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, characterized in that the plasmids employed are those of the PET series.
9. (Withdrawn) A method for preparing nitrile hydratases using an expression system as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 8.
10. (Previously Presented) A host organism which exhibits an expression system as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 8.
11. (Withdrawn) A method for preparing optionally enantiomerically enriched (amino)carboxylic acids or (amino)carboxamides using a host organism as claimed in claim 10 or an expression system as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 8.